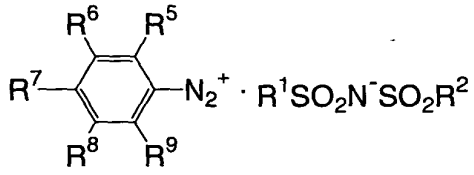
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A heat-sensitive recording material comprising a substrate and a heat-sensitive recording layer containing a diazonium salt and a coupler, the heat-sensitive recording layer being disposed on or over the substrate, wherein the diazonium salt is a compound represented by the following general formula (1):

General formula (1)



wherein R^1 and R^2 each independently represent an alkyl group or an aryl group; R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8 and R^9 each independently represent one selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a chlorine atom, a bromine atom, an alkyl group, an aryl group, an alkoxy group, an aryloxy group, an acyl group, an alkoxycarbonyl group, an aryloxycarbonyl group, a carbamoyl group, a cyano group, an alkylthio group, an arylthio group, an alkylsulfonyl group, an arylsulfonyl group, an amino group, an amido group, and a nitro group; and two or more of R^1, R^2, R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8 and R^9 may be bonded to each other to form a ring.

2. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 1, wherein

the coupler is a compound represented by the following general formula (5):

General formula (5)

$$E^1—CH_2—E^2$$

wherein E^1 and E^2 each independently represent an electron attractive group, and E^1 and E^2 may be bonded to each other to form a ring.

3. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 1, wherein the diazonium salt is encapsulated in microcapsules.

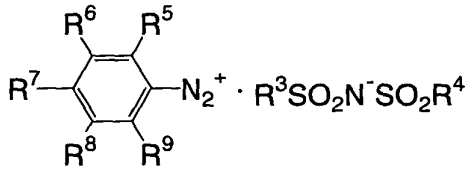
4. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 3, wherein capsule walls of the microcapsules contain at least one of polyurethane and polyurea.

5. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 1, wherein the diazonium salt is contained in an amount of 0.02 to 5 g/m^2 in the heat-sensitive recording layer.

6. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 1, wherein the diazonium salt is contained in an amount of 0.1 to 4 g/m^2 in the heat-sensitive recording layer.

7. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 1, wherein the diazonium salt is a compound represented by the following general formula (2):

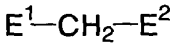
General formula (2)



wherein R^3 and R^4 each independently represent a fluoroalkyl group or a fluoroaryl group; R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8 and R^9 each independently represent one selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a chlorine atom, a bromine atom, an alkyl group, an aryl group, an alkoxy group, an aryloxy group, an acyl group, an alkoxycarbonyl group, an aryloxycarbonyl group, a carbamoyl group, a cyano group, an alkylthio group, an arylthio group, an alkylsulfonyl group, an arylsulfonyl group, an amino group, an amido group, and a nitro group; and two or more of R^3, R^4, R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8 and R^9 may be bonded to each other to form a ring.

8. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 7, wherein the coupler is a compound represented by the following general formula (5):

General formula (5)



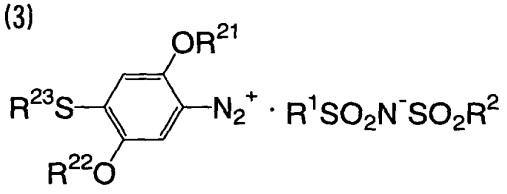
wherein E^1 and E^2 each independently represent an electron attractive group, and E^1 and E^2 may be bonded to each other to form a ring.

9. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 7, wherein the diazonium salt is encapsulated in microcapsules.

10. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 9, wherein capsule walls of the microcapsules contain at least one of polyurethane and polyurea.

11. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 1, wherein the diazonium salt is a compound represented by the following general formula (3):

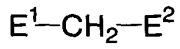
General formula (3)



wherein R^1 and R^2 each independently represent an alkyl group or an aryl group; R^{21}, R^{22} and R^{23} each independently represent an alkyl group or an aryl group; and R^1 and R^2 may be bonded to each other to form a ring.

12. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 11, wherein the coupler is a compound represented by the following general formula (5):

General formula (5)



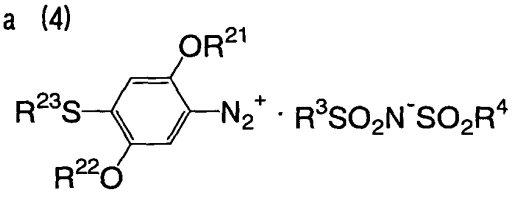
wherein E^1 and E^2 each independently represent an electron attractive group, and E^1 and E^2 may be bonded to each other to form a ring.

13. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 11, wherein the diazonium salt is encapsulated in microcapsules.

14. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 13, wherein capsule walls of the microcapsules contain at least one of polyurethane and polyurea.

15. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 1, wherein the diazonium salt is a compound represented by the following general formula (4):

General formula (4)



wherein R^3 and R^4 each independently represent a fluoroalkyl group or a fluoroaryl group; R^{21}, R^{22} and R^{23} each independently represent an alkyl group or an aryl group; and R^3 and R^4 may be bonded to each other to form a ring.

16. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 15, wherein the coupler is a compound represented by the following general formula (5):

General formula (5)

$$E^1—CH_2—E^2$$

wherein E^1 and E^2 each independently represent an electron attractive group, and E^1 and E^2 may be bonded to each other to form a ring.

17. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 15, wherein the diazonium salt is encapsulated in microcapsules.

18. The heat-sensitive recording material of claim 17, wherein capsule walls of the microcapsules contain at least one of polyurethane and polyurea.